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THE TRAVELS OF THREE INSECTS

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* To · My · Babie · Marie *

The Travels of Three Insects

BY

ANNA MORRISON ALDRICH

ILLUSTRATED BY

MARY A. MORRISON

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The Travels of Three Insects.

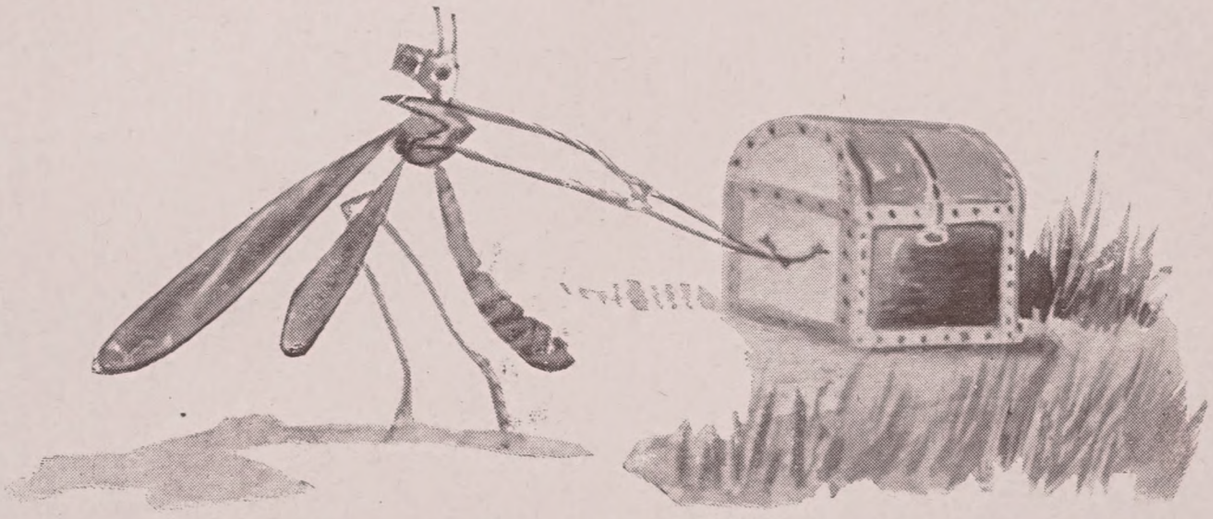
ONCE a Gallinipper, being left alone in the world, and fearing the cold winter, that was rapidly approaching, decided to journey to a warmer clime.

Although somewhat advanced in age for a Gallinipper, his legs were nimble, and his wings,

although still strong, were much worn by long service. Knowing that travel would increase their rusty appearance, he decided to invest a small portion of his fortune in a new pair, to add, when the occasion demanded, some show of elegance, to his antique but dignified mien.

He had a trunk made in which he carried the necessary articles for his journey, and in that he laid, with proud emotion, the much-prized wings.

When all preparations were complete, he



started on his journey, and vainly tried to drag along his trunk.

Finding this a hopeless undertaking, he seated himself on a toadstool, and, shutting his eyes, began to think how he could transport his luggage.

When almost in despair, and feeling sure his much-longed-for trip would have to be abandoned, he heard a rustling sound among the leaves around him.

Opening his eyes quickly, he discovered a

Grasshopper near at hand, gazing upon him with distended eyes, and wondering to himself what in the wide world that old Gallinipper was doing so far from home.

"Why, friend Gallinipper," said the Grasshopper, why are you so sad, and what is that black thing at your side?"

"My dear sir," replied the Gallinipper in a haughty tone, "*that* is my trunk, containing the necessities for a long journey, and I assure you, sir, I have lived long enough to know that even

an old insect like me must see the world before he dies. Just now I am on my way to the border of the ocean, but have come to a dead halt, not being able to take my baggage with me."

"Well," said the Grasshopper, "I have long wished to behold the sea, but not caring to venture thus far by myself, I have never been there. If you would like my company, we might go together, and I will carry your trunk."

"Agreed," said Gallinipper; "I am sure no

insect could desire more worthy company, and I assure you, your services shall not go unrewarded."

With the aid of the Gallinipper the Grasshopper shouldered the trunk, and they started, each with his usual gait.

But the Grasshopper gave one hop, leaving poor Gallinipper far behind. However, with a great effort, he managed to overtake his friend, but, when Mr. Grasshopper began hopping and hopping, the Gallinipper was not only overcome

with anxiety about the safety of his wings, but he feared the Grasshopper would reach the sea long before he could. Hearing a cry of "stop," the Grasshopper halted, and waited for his ancient friend to join him, and before starting on another hop, decided to hold a council.

"At this rate, my friend," said the Grasshopper, "it will be many a long day before you breathe salt air. Now, I propose that you let me put the trunk down in this quiet spot where nothing can molest it, and I will carry you on

my back to the ocean, and will return for the trunk."

"Nothing would please me better," replied the Gallinipper, "for I should be most happy to get out of this part of the country before the shadows of night settle down upon us, for I understand many huge and ravenous beasts, at times, dwell here."

Mounting the back of the Grasshopper, and the Grasshopper giving a big hop, they continued their journey, reaching the ocean, after a

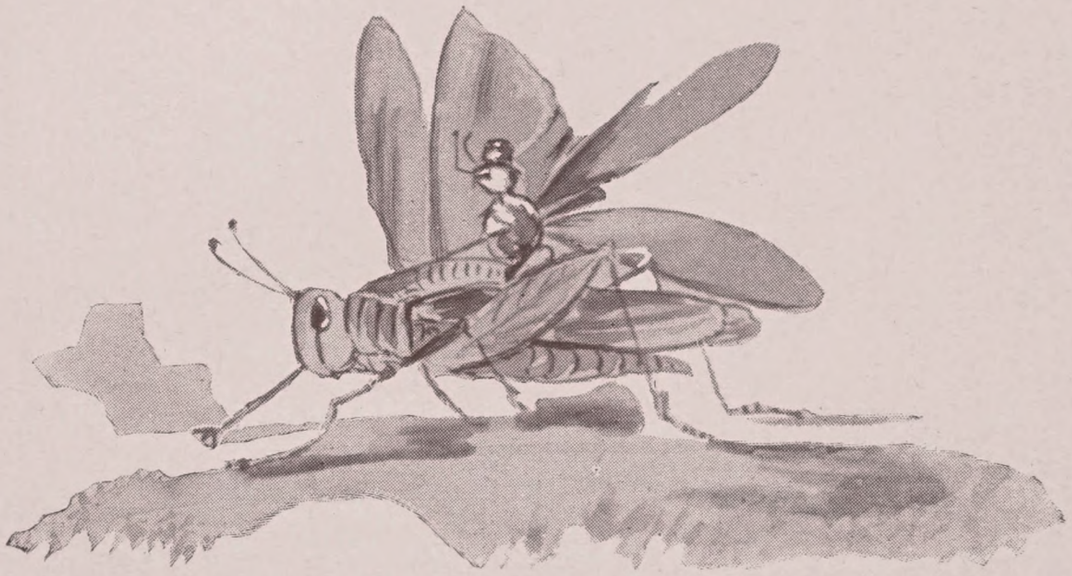
few delays in stopping to rest occasionally and to admire the scenery.

In the meantime, a Blue-bottle fly passing over the same route, and, growing weary from flying so far, seeing a black object in his way, sat down upon it to rest. He soon fell asleep and dreamed of a beautiful land inhabited by flies only, and all of remarkable beauty; the light shining from their wings of such marvelous brilliancy that all things around were illuminated, and all was warmth and happiness. But night

was approaching, and a chill North wind blowing on Blue-bottle awoke him. With a groan, he raised himself up, wishing his dream was true, and that flies did not have to crawl and grub for their daily food.

Jumping off of the trunk quickly, he saw the sun was about to dip down behind the edge of the sky, and he would have to hurry if he intended to reach any safe shelter before dark.

"Why not stay here?" he said. "No, not in this lonely spot; but I wonder what kind of a



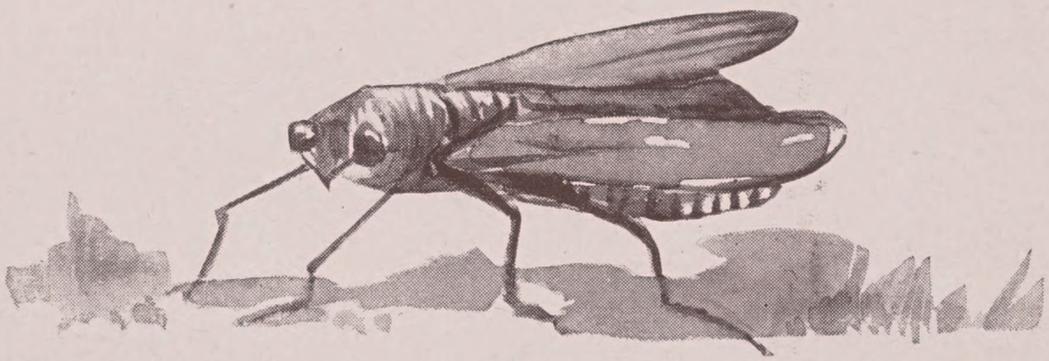
bed this is on which I have had so good a rest?"

Crawling around he found a place where it seemed to open, and touching accidentally a spring, much to his surprise and fear, his improvised bed opened, and there, reposing softly on padded cushions, was a pair of brand-new wings, not quite as lovely as those in his dreams, but grand and bright enough to make him want them. Hastily pulling them out of the trunk, he put them over his old ones. He was a wise fly,

and did not propose to dispense with the wings that had served him well, until he found out how much these beautiful new ones were worth.

But they answered very well, and thanking his lucky star that they had fallen to his lot, he hastened on, flying faster and faster as he grew accustomed to his new wings.

Soon he reached the seashore, not nearly as tired as he expected to be, and there met the Gallinipper and the Grasshopper waiting for some means of transportation over the ocean.



The Gallinipper and the Grasshopper, seeing him coming toward them, were surprised at the sight, for they hardly knew what kind of an insect it was.

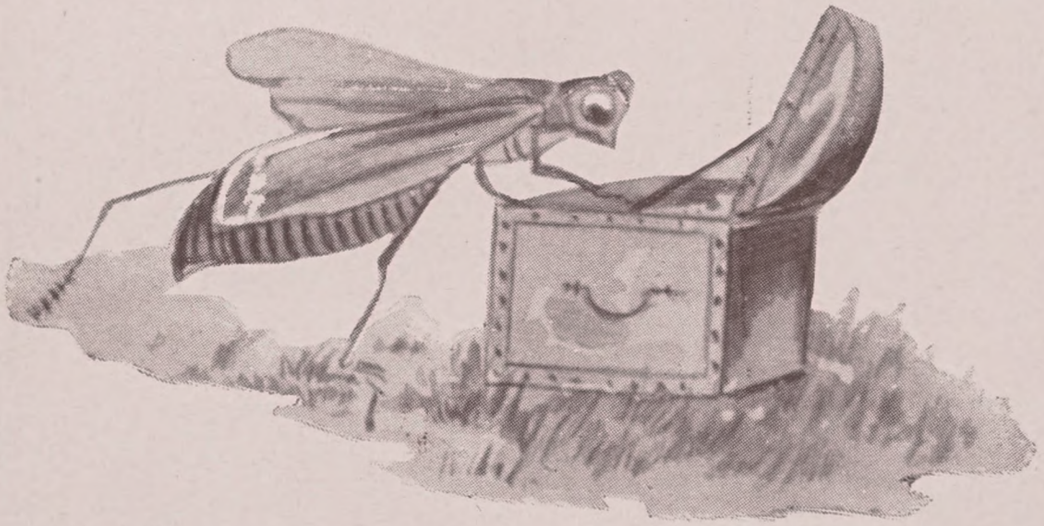
"One would suppose," said the Gallinipper, "looking at his wings, he was a relation of mine, but his general appearance gives one an entirely different impression; he must belong to some other family."

"He puzzles me," said the Grasshopper, "but he may make a pleasant companion for you

on your journey, for I must leave you shortly, and go about my business."

So they bowed politely to the stranger, and asked his destination.

"I have no settled plan," said the Blue-bottle fly, "but, feeling a desire to see new countries, I have ventured thus far, and now, having reached the edge of the ocean, would like to navigate a little, but not without a safe vessel of some kind to transport me to the other side."



"My friend, Mr. Grasshopper," said the Gallinipper, "informs me that Sea-gulls pass this way, and for a small compensation, will gladly carry passengers over to some island, or land them on some passing vessel, and I have determined to avail myself of this means of conveyance as soon as Mr. Grasshopper goes for my trunk, which we were obliged to leave on the way. Perhaps you saw it while coming here? I assure you it contained some valuable things."

The Blue-bottle gave a knowing wink, but remarked only that he did see a black object on the road, but had no time to examine it.

The Grasshopper soon bade them farewell, and by daylight they spied a Sea-gull sailing in the air toward them.

"This, my friend," said the Blue-bottle fly, "is too good a chance to lose; therefore, I beg you to let your baggage take care of itself, and depart with me."

This, Gallinipper was unwilling to do, but,

being over-persuaded by the Blue-bottle, consented, and, with his friend, mounted the wings of the Gull, and was soon floating in air, on, on, over the water.

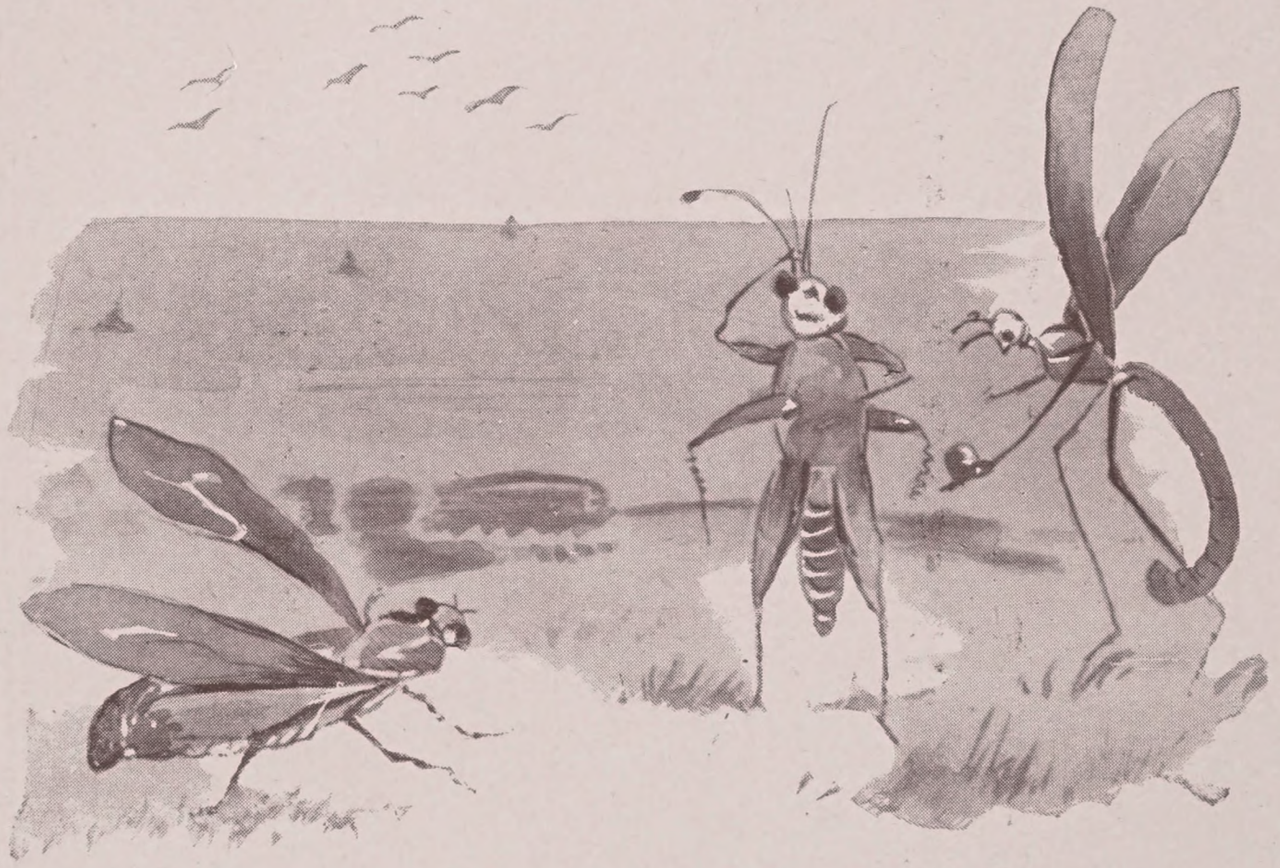
Amazed, frightened, fascinated, on, on they flew, until, in the distance, they plainly beheld the masts of a steamer.

On its approach, the Sea-gull gave them an opportunity to alight, and near to a lovely little boy, who was struck with wonder at the sudden and strange appearance of the pair who looked

alike yet not alike. Soon the boy was joined by his little sister, and Gallinipper and Blue-bottle gazed with awe at the wonderful beauty of the children who skipped and romped on the deck of the steamer, while Gallinipper and Blue-bottle looked on.

"Come here, Lily," said the boy, "and see these strange insects. One looks like a big mosquito, and the other like a mosquito and fly combined."

"Let's take care of them, brother," said the



little girl, "and feed them, and carry them to our home."

So Gallinipper and Blue-bottle were put in a box, and kept from harm until they reached a harbor, when they landed, and were carried off of the steamer into a great big city.

By this time they longed to be free again, and often ventured out in the strange city alone.

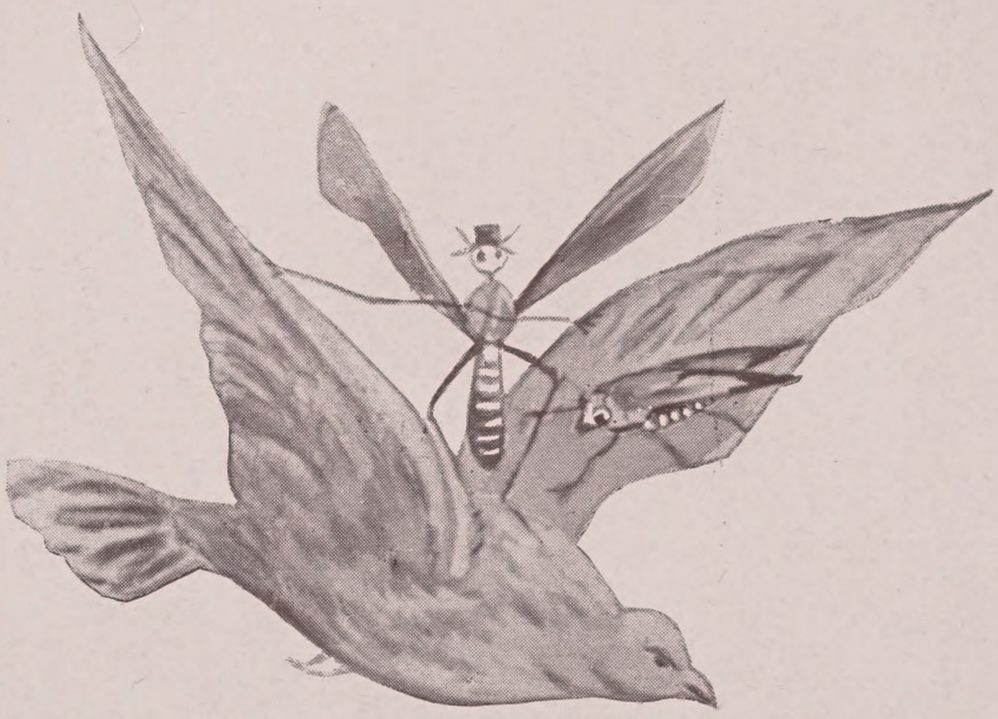
One day they went so far they could not find their way back, and feeling lonely and sadly missing the dear little boy and girl who had

shown them much kindness, and feeling tired and hungry, they sat down on a stone, a very small stone, and wept, longing and crying for their home over the sea.

"If I only knew how to get home," said Blue-bottle, "I would stay there, and never venture away again."

"Yes," said Gallinipper, "I, too, would be satisfied, and happy, for, in all my wanderings, I have not found a place I like so well."

While they were talking a small black in-



sect was quietly weaving a net around them. The net was so fine they did not see it until they were completely imprisoned. At least Bluebottle was, for when he tried to fly away, his stolen wings were caught, and came off, and it was impossible for him to make his escape, but Gallinipper, by a little device of his own, managed to cut the web and fly away.

He afterward met other Gallinippers who showed him how to reach his far-off home,

where he lived contented and happy until he was a very old Gallinipper.

Sometimes he thought, with a sigh, of Bluebottle, whose wicked thieving had caused his death.

The old Grasshopper, grown lame with age, was often his guest, and they are there still, passing the evening of life together, and telling each other over and over again there is no place like their humble home.

For, though Blue-bottle may venture,
And insects may roam,
Gallinipper and Grasshopper
Would rather stay home.

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